



December - Law of the Month

Operation by Youthful Operators Restricted

December is coming and that means that the snow is going to start falling. This also means that citizens are going to be getting out their snowmobiles. With that, snowmobiles are going to be hitting the trails and it is important to know the rules and regulations regarding youth drivers. If a child is operating a snowmobile and does not know how to use the snowmobile this can be very dangerous for other operators and the child.

Youth can drive snowmobiles but there are rules and regulations that have to be followed in order for the county to have a safe snowmobile season. It is also important to make sure that as parents of youth you know where the keys to your snowmobiles are so that a child cannot get ahold of them. If a child gets his or her hands on the keys and takes the snowmobile out on the trails he or she may get lost or worse, crash.

The state law is operation by youthful operators is restricted. The law states that anyone under the age of 12 may not at any time operate a snowmobile by themselves. A person under the age of 12 may operate the snowmobile if they are accompanied by a parent or guardian or a person of the age 18 or older. The parent, guardian, or person 18 years of age or older must also have his or her snowmobile safety certificate.

350.05- Operation by youthful operators restricted

PERSONS UNDER 12. No person under the age of 12 years may operate a snowmobile unless the person is accompanied either by a parent or guardian or by a person over 18 years of age.

(2) PERSONS AGED 12 AND OLDER; SNOWMOBILE SAFETY CERTIFICATES AND PROGRAM.

(a) No person who is at least 12 years of age and who is born on or after January 1, 1985, may operate a snowmobile unless he or she holds a valid snowmobile safety certificate.

(b) Any person who is required to hold a snowmobile safety certificate while operating a snowmobile shall carry proof that the person holds a valid safety certificate and shall display such proof to a law enforcement officer on request.

(c) Persons enrolled in a safety certification program approved by the department may operate a snowmobile in an area designated by the instructor.

(3) EXCEPTIONS. This section does not apply to the operation of snowmobiles upon lands owned or leased by the operator's parent or guardian. As used in this section, "leased lands" does not include lands leased by an organization of which said operator or the operator's parent or guardian is a member.

(4) DEFINITION. For purposes of this section, "accompany" means to be on the same snowmobile as the operator.